

WELLINGTON (Somerset)
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.



❖ Annual Report ❖
For 1894,

BY

DR. J. MEREDITH

Medical Officer of Health.

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Annual Report

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Medical Officer of Health.

January 24th, 1895.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit my annual report of the district for the year 1894.

Having given a full account of the geology of the district in last year's report, there is no use in repeating the information ; and I would say the same in regard to local industries and the occupation of the people.

There has been no new work done in connection with the sewerage beyond the construction of some more new drains and doing away with the old and faulty ones. The town scavenging has been efficiently done.

There were 183 births in the district during the year, equal to 26 per thousand of population, and 118 deaths, being at the rate of 16·62 per thousand. Only two deaths occurred from zymotic disease and these were from diphtheria in the early part of the year. In the first of these I was not able to trace contact with either an insanitary state of things about the dwelling, or with a similar case elsewhere : no other case of the kind occurred in the same house.

As to the second, a serious nuisance arising from escape of sewer gas was discovered only a few yards from the door of the house, and the

victim, a boy aged five years, was playing near the defective grating, the site of the nuisance, just before he was taken ill. The nuisance, of course, was abated, and there has been no recurrence of the illness.

Three deaths took place from whooping cough and its sequelae.

As will be seen from table A there is nothing unusual in the diseases, ages, or localities to comment upon, except, as already reported to the Council, the deaths among children under one year of age has been high, compared to the returns of late years. There were 27 cases ; equal to 147 per thousand births.

The water supply of the town has been plentiful and of good quality during the year.

Inspections have been carried out as on former occasions.

Many nuisances were reported arising from defective ejects, and consequent accumulation of filth at the sites, but all, after formal notice from the Board, were abated, and the defective masonry repaired. Some half a dozen complaints were made of nuisance arising from pigs and pig manure, attaining a serious character in a few instances. One large piggery was closed by order of the Inspector of the Board of Agriculture, on account of an outbreak of swine fever.

In a couple of cases, persons kept pigs in excessive numbers within the prescribed distance from dwellings, to the prejudice of the health of the people of the place, but the nuisances were abated after notice. Offensive smells were also complained of, arising from keeping fowls and other birds in an uncleanly state, too near dwellings, which had to be abated.

A harassing nuisance was brought to notice in April, arising from closets constructed long ago without syphons, and emptying into a catch pit in a garden. This annoyance was aggravated at times by smells from a manure heap on adjoining premises. Both defects were rectified in due course.

A nuisance from a catchpit in an outlying part of the district was brought to notice, and in due course the cause of the complaint was removed.



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Eighteen notifications of infectious cases of sickness were sent to me. Six of these were alleged to be scarlet fever; but the disorder was of an exceptional nature and caused no anxiety. Four were stated to be typhoid fever. After, however, making close enquiry I became persuaded that the illness was not of the nature specified, and that there was no ground for apprehending recurrence of an outbreak of an illness which the district experienced so severely some years ago.

These cases were not connected in any way with one another.

Five were diphtheria, two of which proved fatal, as already stated. Two cases only were associated with insanitary conditions of things. There have been no notifications of diphtheria since my last. The other three cases making up the 18 were erysipelas and called for no remarks.

There have been no notifications since September.

The common lodging-house was regularly visited during the year.

2423 tramps took refuge in the casual wards, but they imported no disorder into the district, and no information has been received of any having passed through suffering even in an incipient form from any infectious disease.

During last year, I have been able to submit, thanks to a competent contributor, a monthly meteorological statement. About 40 inches of rain fell during the year.

As has already been reported, I have inspected the hamlet of Wrangway several times in course of the year, chiefly in reference to the water supply. This is now, and has been for a good while, of a satisfactory character.

I have to add that the sanitary inspector's book has as usual been examined by me in preparing my report.

I forward herewith the usual tables of deaths and sickness.

Signed, JOHN MEREDITH,

Medical Officer of Health of the Urban District Council.

